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Congresswoman Matsui Announces \$5 Million Recovery Health IT Award for Los Rios Community College District

Sacramento Selected as One of Five Training Sites Nationally

SACRAMENTO, CA— Today, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-05) announced the award of a grant totaling \$5,435,587 for Sacramento's Los Rios Community College District. Los Rios is one of five community college districts in the country that will participate in the program through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), and will serve as the lead institution for a consortium of 14 colleges in California, Nevada, Arizona, and Hawaii. The money, authorized by the Recovery Act which Rep. Matsui supported last year, will be used to establish a training program focusing on computerized health information systems for providers already in the field around Sacramento.

"Today's award serves to benefit the Sacramento community in a multitude of ways as it improves our local care delivery system, adds expertise to our workforce, attracts cutting-edge jobs to our region, and establishes relationships across California," said Rep. Matsui. "As the training program produces well-qualified health information technology professionals who are already call Sacramento home, our residents will begin to see improvements in their care. Health IT has the potential to save the lives of our friends, families and loved ones, while also reducing costs."

"The colleges involved in this grant will work together to implement curriculum designed to cross-train folks with computer or health care backgrounds and prepare them to work in hospitals and doctors' offices throughout the Western region," said Los Rios Chancellor Brice Harris. "This is critically important work that will act to improve health care outcomes and reduce costs and we are thrilled that one of our colleges will be taking the lead."

The Community College Consortia Program provides assistance to five regional recipients to establish a multi-institutional consortium within each designated region. The five regional consortia will include 70 community colleges in total. Each college will create non-degree training programs that can be completed in six months or less by individuals with appropriate prior education and/or experience. Locally, the consortium will have a strong working relationship with the health informatics program at UC Davis and will also take advantage of the university's expertise as a primary health care provider.

“Training a cadre of new health IT professionals and breaking down barriers to the adoption of meaningful use of health IT are both critical to the national effort to use information technology to realize better patient care,” stated David Blumenthal, MD, MPP, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. “The institutions receiving awards today will develop necessary roadmaps to help health care providers and hospitals implement and effectively use electronic health records.”

The colleges that will share in the training grant include the Los Rios District’s Cosumnes River College, Butte College, College of Southern Nevada, Cypress College, East Los Angeles College, Fresno City College, Honolulu Community College, Mission College, Orange Coast College, Phoenix College, Pima College, Santa Barbara City College, San Diego Mesa College, and Santa Monica College.

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